

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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S E C R E T NEW DELHI 1220

EXDIS

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IN, US

SUBJ: INDO-US RELATIONS: JOINT BUSINESS COUNCIL

1. LAST WEEK HARISH MAHINDRA, THE PRIVATE INDIAN BUSINESSMAN WHO HEADS THE INDIAN DELEGATION TO THE COMING JOINT BUSINESS COUNCIL MEETING CAME IN TO SEE ME TO DISCUSS THE COUNCIL. I DESCRIBED TO HIM THE SORRY STATE OF US-INDIA RELATIONS AND TOLD HIM THAT AS A RESULT I WOULD HAVE NOTHING WHATSOEVER TO DO WITH THE JOINT BUSINESS COUNCIL SESSIONS.

2. AT THE REPUBLIC DAY PARADE TODAY, KEWAL SINGH SOUGHT ME OUT IN THE CROWD AND ASKED THAT I COME TO HIS HOME, AVTER THE AFFAIR TO DISCUSS "OUR DISAGREEMENTS.

3. I AGREED AND ARRIVED AT HIS HOME AT 1:00 PM. HE SAID THAT THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY (HARISH MAHINDRA) HAD REPORTED THAT I WAS VERY UNCOOPERATIVE IN REGARD TO THE VISIT OF THE AMERICAN BUSINESS GROUP BUT HE (SINGH) WAS SURE THAT IT WAS A MINOR MISUNDERSTANDING AND HE WOULD WORK IT OUT WITH ME. HE THEN PROCEEDED INTO A FIFTEEN MINUTE MONOLOGUE ABOUT THE BASIC FRIENDLINESS OF OUR TWO COUNTRIES, THAT HE WAS AN OLD HAND IN DIPLOMACY AND THAT MINOR DAY TO DAY MISUNDERSTANDINGS SHOULD NEVER INTERFERE WITH BASIC BUSINESS CONTACT FOR MUTUAL BENEFIT.

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I REPLIED THAT THIS WAS NO MINOR DISAGREEMENT,

THAT WE HAD BEEN REPEATEDLY ATTACKED BY BOTH THE
P.M. AND THE FOREIGN MINISTER AND BY OTHER CONGRESS
PARTY LEADERS; THAT THEY WELL KNEW SUCH ATTACKS WERE
WITHOUT FOUNDATION; THAT OUR PROTESTS HAD GONE UN-
NOTICED AND THAT WE COULD SEE NO BENEFIT TO THE USG
FOR CONTINUING THE FICTION OF FRIENDLY INTERCOURSE; THAT
OUR POLICY WAS TO NOT INTERFERE IN THEIR AFFAIRS EITHER
POLITICAL OR COMMERCIAL AND IF THEY COULD SELL INDIA TO
AMERICAN BUSINESSMEN IT WOULD BE O.K. BUT THAT I
INTENDED TO HAVE NO PART OF IT UNTIL I SAW SOME EVIDENCE
OF A CHANGE IN THE OFFICIAL ATTITUDE OF THE GOI TOWARD
THE U.S.
SAXBE

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